

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend paragraph [0034] as follows:

[0034] Rather than forming distinct voltage reference traces on a substrate, conductive material from a conductive layer of the substrate may be removed only from portions immediately surrounding a desired signal trace location to create an electrically isolating trough or gap 40 (see Figure 13) between the signal trace 38 and the ~~remainder 42~~ remainder of the conductive ~~material~~ material 42 on the substrate 32. As shown in Figure 13, a layer of conductive ~~material~~ material 42 on a substrate 32 has been removed only around the coplanar signal traces 38. Methods of removing selected portions of conductive material from a substrate, such as by masking and etching, are well known in the art. By leaving a majority of the conductive ~~material~~ material 42 on the substrate 32, etching solution is preserved. Furthermore, by connecting the remaining conductive material 42, other than the coplanar signal traces 38, to a reference voltage, the electromagnetic or electrostatic field emanating from a signal trace 38 will not be coupled by an adjacent signal trace 38, but will be coupled by the conductive material 42 remaining between each of the signal traces 38. This aspect of the invention may also be applied to substrates having multiple conductive layers such as those described with regard to Figures 6-10. As will be clear to one of ordinary skill in the art, a region around the solder pads of a printed circuit board, or any other point where the signal traces connect with an external component, should be clear of conductive material for a region sufficient to avoid solder flow shorting the signal trace to the conductive material. The size of the cleared region required will depend upon the particular signal trace layout, bond pad size and soldering techniques used, but may be readily determined by one of ordinary skill in the art. As will also be clear to one of skill in the art, a passivation layer 50 (see Figures 8, 12 and 13) may be placed over a conductive layer to reduce the likelihood of shorts between the conductive traces due to dust or other debris. Passivation layers and methods of applying them are well known in the art.